

Жаклин Е. Уитт. Изучая причины, ход и последствия войн ...

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## **STUDYING THE CAUSES, CONDUCT, AND CONSEQUENCES OF WAR: THE SOCIETY FOR MILITARY HISTORY**

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## **ИЗУЧАЯ ПРИЧИНЫ, ХОД И ПОСЛЕДСТВИЯ ВОЙН: ОБЩЕСТВО ВОЕННОЙ ИСТОРИИ**

The Society for Military History (SMH) is an international scholarly society dedicated to advancing the study of military history. It was founded in 1933 and today boasts more than 2600 members, including academics, soldiers, and independent researchers who are interested in military history. While most of the Society's members are based in the United States, there is a growing contingent of international scholars, and increasing the presence of international scholars has been a consistent focus in the past few years. Importantly, the Society defines its mission broadly, and this broad mission is reflected in both its membership and the topics on which members conduct research. Bound by neither chronology nor geography, the Society is linked by its topical devotion to the study of wars, warfare, militaries, and societies.

The 2013 Annual Meeting was held in New Orleans, Louisiana, from March 14 -17, 2013, on the theme of "War, Society, and Remembrance" and was hosted by the Center for the Study of War & Society at the University of Southern Mississippi with the National World War II Museum and Southeastern Louisiana University. The conference program included more than 64 panels, with more than 250 individual presenters and commenters. Professor Joseph Glatthaar of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) delivered the Society's presidential and keynote address.

In recent years, the SMH has worked actively to engage a range of historical fields related to the study of war by highlighting presidential panels and roundtables that are cosponsored by other academic societies. The 2013 conference lineup included four such panels: "The Convergence of Military and Environmental History" with the American Society for Environmental History; "Perspectives on the Cold War in Europe and the Pacific" with the US Commission on Military History; "Revolutionary War and Diplomacy in the Third World" with the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations; and "War and Medicine" with the American Association for the History of Medicine. Each of these panels offered attendees the

chance to hear from scholars not normally associated with the field of military history, but whose work informs the work of military historians and encourages intellectual and methodological exchanges.

Beyond these panels specifically designed to increase connections across fields, the program of the SMH's annual meeting reflects the flourishing of military history as a field, rooted in the study of war, battles, and military organizations, but ever expanding the scope of inquiry to include the effects of culture, society, race, gender, empire, and politics on war and vice versa. The 2013 conference's emphasis on the question of "remembrance" of wars, rather than a strict adherence to a Rankean vision of telling history "as it really happened," is indicative of these emerging trends.

At the 2013 meeting, panel and paper topics ranged widely. Alongside panels on logistics and tactics of naval power in the Atlantic, military leadership, airplanes, and the technology-human interface, there were panels on civil rights struggles in the US military during World War II and Vietnam, women's variegated roles in war, and the politics of war memorialization. Several panels also tackled questions of pedagogy. For example, several scholars spoke about the challenges and opportunities of teaching Asian military history to a Western audience. In addition, a number of panels dealt with some of the more prosaic dilemmas of the profession, such as the challenges of writing official history, using oral histories, and the expanding world of digital history. Taken together, the 2013 program was evidence that the SMH has something for just about everyone, and there is a lot of cross-talk between historians who work in different fields about sources, methods, interpretations, and frameworks that we can use to deepen and invigorate research agendas and fields of inquiry.

The conference concluded with a presidential roundtable focused on the Society's past and visions for the future. The retrospective roundtable featured past presidents of the Society, including Joe Glatthaar (UNC), Richard Kohn (UNC), Brian Linn (Texas A&M University), Allan Millett (University of New Orleans), Timothy Nenninger (National Archives and Records Administration), Carol Reardon (Pennsylvania State University), and Dennis Showalter (Colorado College). All agreed that the SMH has a strong legacy and an optimistic future as membership continues to grow and academics who identify as military historians gain reputations as serious scholars who are engaged in relevant and current research and who ably navigate socially- and culturally-oriented fields. The roundtable members also highlighted the value of the Society's role in providing productive meeting space for academics, military practitioners, and independent researchers, connecting the sometimes disparate worlds of the academy, the policy world, and the public interest.

The 2014 Annual Meeting will be held in Kansas City, Missouri, from April, 3-6, 2014. The conference will focus broadly on the idea of "Trans-

formational Conflicts: War and its Legacy through History.” The upcoming conference will be hosted by Command and General Staff College Foundation, Inc., the National World War I Museum at Liberty Memorial, the Harry S. Truman Presidential Museum and Library, and the Department of History at the University of Kansas. The range of organizations working to host the Annual Meeting is indicative of the Society’s integrated approach to its mission, bringing in participants from a range of civilian, military, and governmental organizations.

The Society maintains a website (<http://www.smh-hq.org/>) to keep members and others interested in the field apprised of events, awards, grants, and job opportunities. The site also hosts a blog that provides commentary on items of particular contemporary relevance and interests.